ARA 3PT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

384

EXCISE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY JOHN SIMMS DATE 2-27-81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

CHARGE/John D. Blacken

August 15, 1977

CONS/Richard A. Mc Coy

People's Temple Immigrants

[redacted] telephoned me this morning to express his concern about the large number of Americans arriving in Guyana sponsored by Bishop Jones of the People's Temple Mission. Specifically, [redacted] wanted to know if we had any information on Bishop Jones or his organization. He stated that over 400 immigrants have recently been scheduled to arrive in Guyana, but plans to have them arrive in a group fell through. They are now arriving in groups of 40 or 50 with the majority being elderly people. Of particular concern to [redacted] was an incident that allegedly occurred last Saturday night when 45 people arrived and were not met by a representative of the People's Temple until 6 a.m. the following morning. Apparently, one person attempted to leave the group at the airport but was prevented from doing so by another member of the group. [redacted] is attempting to confirm this report.

[redacted] is now very concerned that members of this organization are being transported to Guyana against their will. He is also concerned as to how these members will be able to live in Guyana since because of their age they are obviously unsuited for agricultural work at the PeoplesTemple farm in the Northwest Region. I informed [redacted] that the Embassy had no unfavorable information concerning either Bishop Jones or his religious organization. I indicated that they had been critical of the Nixon administration and its policy vis-a-vis Guyana, but that Bishop Jones had told me that he had been in contact with Mrs. Carter and that his religious organization is loosely affiliated with the South Baptist Conference which is the church that President Carter belongs to. I indicatdd to him that I was aware of the group of people coming into Guyana although I was not aware of their age. I continued that I would certainly be concerned as would the U.S. Government if members of this group were forced to leave the United States to come to Guyana under duress.

B-B6

B-B6

B-B6

B-B6

B-B6

I asked him to pass on the report of this incident that purportedly occurred Saturday night. I told [redacted] that members of the People's Temple had little contact with the Embassy unless they required passport services but that this was not unusual since the U. S. Government did not require that its citizens register with us. He promised to notify me if he had any additional information that would bear further scrutiny on our part.

E.O.